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ABSTRACT

Recommendations have been made for major curriculum changes in agricultural education, specifically agriculture programs at the secondary level. Suggested improvements include emphasis in agricultural science, agribusiness, marketing, management, and food production and processing. One change especially desired is placement of more emphasis on internationalizing the agricultural education curriculum. This paper reviews five programs developed for that purpose: (1) the National Council for Vocational and Technical Education in Agriculture; (2) Future Farmers of America International Programs; (3) Michigan State/North Carolina A&T University Project; (4) Texas A&M University's Instructional Materials Service Curricular Revisions; and (5) International Agriculture Course at Anderson Valley High School, Booneville, California. Each program is described and the impact of each is assessed. Sources for further information about each program are provided in footnotes to the report. (KC)

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# A Review of Activities in Internationalizing the Curriculum in Agricultural Education

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**A Review of Activities in Internationalizing the Curriculum in Agricultural Education**

Significant changes are being called for in agricultural education, specifically vocational agriculture programs at the secondary level. The National Academy of Science report, Understanding Agriculture: New Directions for Education, recommends major changes in the relevance and scope of the curriculum for local vocational agriculture programs. Suggested improvements include emphasis in agricultural science, agribusiness, marketing, management, and food production and processing. A broadening of the subject matter about agriculture and in agriculture is needed according to the Committee on Agriculture in the Secondary Schools. International economics is mentioned as a new curriculum component and an emphasis on new methods of teaching international agriculture is also suggested by the Committee. However, the internationalizing of the curriculum did not emerge as a major focus in the National Academy report.

The National FFA Organization and the National Council for Vocational and Technical Education in Agriculture, The Council, have also been studying high school agriculture programs, looking to what is needed in the future to keep local programs strong and viable. Three subject matter areas, agriscience, agrimarketing, and international agriculture are all receiving attention at the national level. Of the three areas, agrimarketing and agriscience have probably received the most notice.

In July of 1986, the National FFA Board of Directors recognized the need to study agrimarketing and approved the development of a National Agrimarketing Study Committee. The committee, chaired by Dr. Jim Leising of the University of California-Davis, conducted a forum on agrimarketing and made recommendations in July of 1987 regarding how this subject matter could be infused into the curriculum. Some of the recommendations have already been adopted including the formation of a new agrimarketing contest. In October of 1988, The Council held a National Conference in Orlando, Florida, on Agriscience and Emerging Occupations and Technologies. The emphasis of this conference was on infusing agriscience into the curriculum with many exciting and innovative ideas being introduced to the participants.

What is happening nationwide regarding infusing international agriculture into the curriculum is the focus of this report. A task force of The Council chaired by Dr. Bob Martin of Iowa State University is one national level effort investigating the internationalizing of agricultural education. Fortunately, the work of The Council is not the only effort being made in this area. Other projects are beginning to "happen" and hopefully interest will continue to grow. Time is of the essence, and much needs to be accomplished if we are truly going to teach agriculture from a global perspective. Specifically,

six different thrusts for internationalizing the curriculum are reviewed. These include:

Secondary Programs

1. The Council's Project
2. FFA International Programs
3. Michigan State/North Carolina A&T Project
4. Instructional Materials Service Curricular Revisions
5. International Agriculture Course at Anderson Valley High School, Booneville, California

Higher Education

6. AUSUDIAP Resolution

The list should not be construed as the only efforts being made to internationalize the curriculum. Without a national clearinghouse for curriculum development in agricultural education it is difficult to document just exactly what curricular reform is taking place. If a significant program has been overlooked, it is accidental.

**The Council Project** [1]

The National Council for Vocational and Technical Education in Agriculture (The Council) will be administering a project in 1989 on Infusing International Agriculture into the Vocational Agriculture Curriculum. The program is sponsored as a special project of the National FFA Foundation by the United States-Japan Foundation. The US-Japan Foundation is providing a portion of the required funding and participating states must commit sufficient funds, approximately $20,000/state, for the development of instructional materials and inservice educational meetings as a requirement for participation. Two state teams of five persons from a state will be selected for the first year of what will hopefully be an ongoing project.

The goals of The Council's infusing agriculture project include:

1. Increasing student and educator awareness about international relationships and the effect on American agriculture.

2. Increasing student and educator awareness that agriculture is part of a global economy.

3. Providing agricultural educators an international experience that will:

a. increase understanding and broaden perceptions of agriculture internationally.

b. enhance knowledge and skills in a specific agricultural area as taught in another country.

c. increase understanding of the cultures of other countries.

The five person state teams who are selected to participate in this project will include three agriculture teachers (preferably a secondary, post-secondary, and adult educator), a state supervisor and a teacher educator. Project participants will attend a pre-trip seminar to increase awareness of international trade and marketing policies and agreements as well as related international issues. Participants will also receive a cultural orientation concerning their destination. The state teams will then spend approximately two weeks in a foreign country, Japan, meeting with agricultural trade officials and visiting business, political, and cultural organizations. The international experience will also include visiting a host country family.

Upon returning to the United States all participants will attend a centralized work session (approximately five days) to contribute to the following activities:

1. Develop specific lessons, units and/or activities emanating from the international experience that will have implications for American agriculture and should be infused into the agriculture curriculum.

2. Develop plans for inservice work shops and the dissemination of materials with other teachers in their home state.

3. Make recommendations for program changes in the curriculum of their home state and the overseas portion of the program.

4. Assemble a packet of materials which can be disseminated. These materials will include unit outlines, lesson plans, resource materials, references and teacher/student activities. These materials can be shared with educators and other interested parties in participating states and be available to other states upon request to The Council.

Selection for participation in this program will be based on a team proposal developed as a part of a state plan for action. The application was mailed to all State Supervisors of Agricultural Education, Teacher Educators of Agriculture, and

Presidents of State Vocational Agriculture Teacher Associations in September. Completed applications must be postmarked no later than December 15, 1988, and mailed to The Council.

Assessing the Impact

Most would agree that the impact nationwide on internationalizing vocational agriculture curriculum through one year of this project will be minimal. Ten people will be traveling to one country for a very short-term visit. However, this is the first year of an expectant ongoing project that will be serving as a pilot test of the program. Consider the possibilities; what if 50 teams of five people visited in 20-25 countries for two weeks and then came together for a one week conference to share their experiences and develop curriculum for use at the local level? And, what if this was repeated on an annual basis? The results would be remarkable and agricultural education at the secondary level would definitely include a more global perspective.

**International Programs of the National FFA Organization** [2]

Most of us in the profession have discussed at one time or another the role of the National FFA Organization in influencing the curriculum at the state and local levels. That discussion may have focused upon the benefits of FFA's link with industry in keeping programs up-to-date or it may have included the phrase, the tail (FFA) too often wags the dog (the instructional program). Regardless of your point of view on the role of the National FFA Organization in impacting curricular changes, studying agriculture from a global perspective is being accomplished through the international programs of the FFA.

Participation in international FFA programs has continued to increase over the years. Total participation in 1988 was 693 as compared to 613 in 1987. Two-hundred forty people were involved in outbound programs and 453 inbound. The international department is truly covering the globe with exchanges taking place in 29 countries throughout the world.

Work Experience Abroad (WEA) is the largest program with 102 U.S. students spending 3, 6, or 12 months in a foreign country in 1988. Inbound WEA participants totaled 203 from 23 countries. The U.S. Information Agency continues to provide support for WEA. This year, five FFA members began Around the World (ATW) programs that will take them to four or more countries as they circle the globe. ATW is a bilateral exchange program with West German and Dutch participants joining Americans on programs to Europe.

Participation in the World Agriscience Studies (WASS) program increased from 29 in 1987 to 50 in 1988. Inbound participants were from the Federated States of Micronesia,

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, American Samoa, West Germany, and Sweden; outbound participants went to West Germany, Sweden, and Finland. This program is in the expansion stage with the following countries currently being considered: Ireland, England, Sweden, The Netherlands, New Zealand, and Australia.

The El Salvador project conducted with "Partners of the Americas" provided a four week program in the U.S. for 100 high school valedictorians from El Salvador. Activities included: a week of orientation in Baton Rouge at Louisiana State University, two weeks with host families throughout the U.S., and a week long conference on the democratic processes in the United States in New Orleans. Chapters and State FFA Associations in California, Iowa, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Virginia, and Wisconsin hosted the group.

Travel seminars have become very popular as award programs for FFA members. Twenty-nine national proficiency winners participated in a travel seminar to Europe in June-July with stops in six different countries. Nine FFA members from the State Presidents/Official Delegate group attended the International "Green Week" Exposition in Berlin. The national dairy and livestock judging teams traveled to Europe to compete at the Royal Highland Show in Scotland and the first travel seminar for Nursery/Landscape and Floriculture judging teams visited greenhouses, nurseries, gardens and planetariums in Luxembourg, France, Belgium, Holland, and West Germany. All of the programs mentioned will be continued in 1989.

A new program offered in 1989 is the LINKAGE PROGRAM through Lasting Link and Peace Corps, offering entire FFA chapters the opportunity to learn and study another culture by pairing with a community in a third world country and assisting them financially with a small agri-project.

Assessing the Impact

The International Programs component of the National FFA Organization is substantial and continues to grow both in terms of dollars of investment and numbers of students impacted. To date, most of the direct impact is to the participants of the inbound and outbound programs, though countless talks and slide shows have been held by students upon returning "home". Is there a way of more formally capturing the experiences of these international exchanges to be infused into state curricula? The National FFA organization may be one of our most underutilized resources in infusing international perspectives into the agricultural education curriculum.

## The Michigan State/North Carolina A&T Program [3]

If you ask Dr. Eddie Moore in the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at Michigan State University where "internationalizing" is happening, he'll be quick to tell you it's in Michigan: The Leading State for Internationalizing Agricultural Education Programs (the title of a news release announcing a collaborative project with North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University). This project is being conducted by MSU and NCA&T based on a "Joint Memorandum of Understanding" between the Agency for International Development and the two universities. Financial support was received in 1987-88 and will continue in 1988-89. One project activity was a meeting of agricultural education teachers, university faculty, individuals from government and the private sector to discuss the issue of our youth not being educated for a global society. With input from that meeting, project staff have been developing lesson plans and locating supplemental teaching materials for the following topics:

1. Locating places in Michigan, the United States and abroad.

2. Developing an awareness of international agriculture.

3. Understanding the competition for major agricultural products which are produced in Michigan.

4. Developing nations as trading partners.

5. Exporting Michigan's agricultural products and the best prospects for the 1990's.

The lesson plans and supplemental teaching materials will be field tested this year and available for distribution to Michigan teachers in 1989-90. All materials will fulfill a purpose of infusing a global perspective into local agricultural education programs.

Assessing the Impact

The MSU-NCA&T project taps on an important funding source (USAID) for internationalizing agricultural education curriculum. Dr. Moore reports, "it is our understanding that this is the first time agricultural education has received financial support for this type of collaborative thrust". Although the agricultural content of the materials will be specific to Michigan, the format could be used in any state and much of the general information on awareness of international agriculture would be useful in all states. This appears to be a significant project and things are definitely "happening" in Michigan to internationalize agricultural education curriculum.

## Instructional Materials Service Curricular Revisions [4]

Instructional Materials Service (IMS) is the curriculum unit of the Department of Agricultural Education at Texas A&M University. Major curriculum changes for Agricultural Science, formerly vocational agriculture, are being implemented in Texas. The entire secondary curriculum has been redesigned into semester courses which can be sequenced to form a comprehensive agricultural education program. International topics have been infused into the curriculum during the revision process.

A popular teaching aid produced by IMS is the student material, four to eight page handouts that present the essential subject matter of the lesson in an easily read and understandable format. The student materials include references, a glossary of terms, and suggested student activities. A sample of international topics that have been infused into the introductory course include:

Importance of Agriculture in the World
- Supply and Demand of Food and Fiber
- The Impact of Agriculture on the World Economy

The Interdependency of Agriculture and World Politics
- Factors Affecting World Trade

Food and Fiber
- The World Food Chain - From Production to Consumption
- The World Fiber Chain - From Production to Consumption

Instructional materials for teacher use have also been revised to include a more global perspective for agricultural education programs in Texas.

Assessing the Impact

The curriculum units developed by Instructional Materials Service, particularly the student materials, are excellent. The content is presented in a manner that would require little if any adaptation for use in other states. The materials are available for purchase from IMS and could be used in internationalizing the curriculum for all of agricultural education programs.

## International Agriculture Course at Anderson Valley High School, Boonville, California [5]

Steve McKay, Agriculture teacher at Anderson Valley High School, is best known for his honor as Agriscience Teacher of the Year in 1986. This year, Steve has expanded his innovativeness into the area of international agriculture. A year-long course has been developed and is currently being offered to 17 students. The course is divided into the following components (quarters).

1st Quarter - Assessing the Agricultural Situation in the World - Students prepare a term paper on this topic.

2nd Quarter - Selecting a Country or Product for Production - Students research products and countries and select a product based on economic advantages.

3rd Quarter - International Marketing - Students prepare a marketing plan for the product and country selected in the second quarter.

4th Quarter - International Agricultural Development - Students study the development process and its affect on foreign agricultural systems.

The popularity of the class can be attested to by the fact that enrollment in the course began with 3 students and has grown to 17 students during the year. International students from Micronesia, Mexico, Chile and Costa Rica are enrolled in the class.

Assessing the Impact

This year-long course has internationalized the program at Anderson Valley and serves a very useful purpose for both domestic and international students attending the school. One of the benefits reported by Steve is the positive interaction among class members working on group goals. Cultural barriers have been breached as students gain a better understanding of global interdependence through studying international agriculture. A similar class could be successful in many agricultural education programs and attention should be given to teaching economics through an international agriculture course.

**AUSUDIAP Resolution** [6]

The Association of United States University Directors of International Agricultural Programs, AUSUDIAP, is taking an active role in promoting the internationalizing of agricultural curriculum in higher education. On June 9, 1988, the organization passed the following resolution based upon a recommendation by the Council on Global Education for the Professions, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT AUSUDIAP ENDORSES:

1. the policy that every student of the agricultural professions attain basic, global, professional, agricultural knowledge, and

2. the proposed action to convene a national workshop to identify this knowledge and to recommend alternative means for its incorporation into the curriculum of agricultural colleges.

The impetus for the resolution is a lack of awareness on the part of college agriculture graduates of the agricultural professions in a global context. In past years internationalizing efforts have occurred in higher education usually in the form of new courses in international education or on international topics. For the most part, it appears that students with international career objectives take these courses and the quality of their education has been enhanced. The proportion of students taking international courses in agriculture has remained fairly constant. However, a much larger proportion (estimated to be as high as 85%) of College of Agriculture students receive virtually no exposure to international concerns in agriculture. AUSUDIAP and the Council on Global Education for the Professions considers that situation unacceptable and proposes global agricultural education for all.

> "This unacceptable situation calls for a general educational approach to curriculum development. In order to prepare all students for the realities of agriculture in today's world, basic, professional, agricultural knowledge should be identified and made a part of every student's curriculum." -
>
> AUSUDIAP Resolution, 1988.

A national workshop to identify content and methodologies (models) for infusing international agriculture into appropriate agriculture courses is being proposed. Support of this concept is currently being sought from various national agricultural professional organizations. A task force is being formed to develop a proposal for foundation support of the workshop. The final product of the workshop would be a series of recommendations regarding what constitutes basic, global, agricultural knowledge, suggested curricular materials and ways of implementation, as well as ideas for funding.

Assessing the Impact

The success of this effort is dependent upon receiving a broad base of support from faculty and administrators who are involved in the delivery and administration of agriculture curricula at the college level. Such support is being sought through professional organizations. Our professional organization, Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE), should resolve support of the concept, aid in securing assistance for a national conference, and work diligently to implement a more global agricultural curriculum. The intent of this internationalizing effort is for

all students enrolled in colleges of agriculture to be more aware of the global context of their profession. Successful implementation of the proposed resolution will certainly enhance the education of our students preparing for professional careers in agriculture.

**Footnotes**

[1] Information in this section is abstracted from Infusing International Agriculture into the Vocational Agriculture Curriculum: Program Guide. For more information contact John Pope or Jack Keller, The Council, P. O. Box 15035, 5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309-0035, Phone (703) 360-8832.

[2] Information in this section is abstracted from National FFA Organization, International Programs Annual Report - 1988. For more information contact Mr. Lennie Gamage, National FFA Center, P. O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309, Phone (703) 360-3600.

[3] Information in this section is abstracted from a news release, Michigan: The Leading State for Internationalizing Agricultural Education Programs. For more information contact Dr. Eddie Moore, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, Michigan State University, 410 Agriculture Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039, Phone (517) 355-6580.

[4] Information in this section is taken from curriculum materials produced by Instructional Materials Service. For more information contact IMS, Texas A&M University, F. E. Box 2588, College Station, TX 77843, Phone (409) 845-6601.

[5] For more information on the International Agriculture course contact Steve McKay, Anderson Valley High School, Box 130, Booneville, CA 95415, Phone (707) 895-2514.

[6] Information in this section is abstracted from a resolution endorsed by AUSUDIAP on June 9, 1988. For more information contact Dr. Howard Leavitt, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Amherst, MA 01003, Phone (413) 545-4743.